

SACRED CREATIONS

...because people are sacred creations of God.

01-22-14

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to ask for 1115 support of initiatives which have a Certified Recovery Support Specialist as part of an interdisciplinary approach to supporting individuals on their journey to independence. Individuals throughout Illinois are utilizing this credential to transition from disability income to earned income as culture of holistic wellness continues to expand.

The Certified Recovery Support Specialist (CRSS) credential is a competency-based credential that can be earned by individuals with lived mental health recovery who desire to provide professional peer support. Research indicates that "Participants who were assigned a peer mentor had significantly fewer rehospitalizations and fewer hospital days." Credentialed competency-based recovery support services (aka peer mentors) can be utilized in diverse human service intersections such as overall healthcare, criminal justice, independent living, children and families.

The infrastructure of recovery support services (aka peer support) is desperately in need of workforce development funds in the following areas.

- Education Hours and Supervised Internships to obtain credential
- Learning Collaboratives with participation from the Recovery Support Specialist and immediate Supervisor to insure success when integrating position in to new/existing programs.
- Continuing Education for Individuals to maintain credential.

Illinois has the strongest credentialing requirements in the nation and we need to operate from a position of strength when addressing citizen needs.

I trust this letter will receive favorable review.

Respectfully,

AJ French, Executive Director

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Reference:

Psychiatric Services 62:541-544, 2011